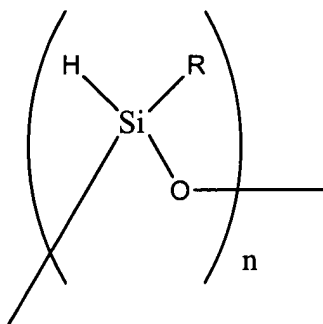


### **REMARKS**

The present application was filed on September 28, 2001 having claims 1-29; claims 1 and 10 have been amended for clarification, and claims 18-29 have been withdrawn from consideration, so claims 1-17 remain pending in the application.

In the Office Action mailed December 23, 2005, the Examiner: (1) rejected claims 1-3, 5-13, and 15-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,613,432 to Zamora et al. ("Zamora") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,383,903 to Totakura ("Totakura"); and (2) rejected claims 4 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Zamora et al. in view of Totakura and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,463,010 to Hu et al. ("Hu"). Reconsideration of the foregoing rejections is respectfully requested.

With respect to the rejection of claims 1-3, 5-13, and 15-17 as obvious over Zamora et al. in view of Totakura, nowhere does Zamora et al. disclose or suggest a method for improving the fray resistance of a suture having at least one filament by applying a coating to at least a portion of a surface of the at least one filament of the suture by a plasma polymerization process of a hydrocyclosiloxane monomer of the general formula



where R is an aliphatic group and n is an integer from 2 to about 10 as presently recited in claim 1. Similarly, nowhere does Zamora disclose or suggest a method for making a suture with such a coating as recited in claim 10. As the Examiner admits in the office action, while Zamora teaches contacting a medical device with hydrocyclosiloxanes, nowhere does Zamora teach coating a suture. Moreover, nowhere does Zamora disclose or suggest methods for improving the fray resistance of a suture having at least one filament by applying a coating to at least a portion of a surface of the at least one filament of the suture by a plasma polymerization process of a hydrocyclosiloxane monomer as recited in claim 1 or a method for making a suture with such a coating as recited in claim 10. Without such a disclosure, Zamora fails to render obvious claims 1-3, 5-13, and 15-17.

Totakura fails to remedy the deficiencies of Zamora. The Examiner asserts that Totakura recites a method of coating polyethylene or polypropylene with siloxane and alkylene oxide. Totakura discloses coating sutures or filaments with a dimethylsiloxane-alkylene oxide copolymer. However, nowhere does Totakura disclose or suggest a method for improving the fray resistance of a suture having at least one filament by applying a coating to at least a portion of a surface of the at least one filament of the suture by a plasma polymerization process of a hydrocyclosiloxane monomer as recited in claim 1 or a method for making a suture with such a coating as recited in claim 10. Moreover, nowhere does Totakura disclose or suggest a coating further including an amine group that has been introduced onto the coating by plasma polymerization (as recited in claims 3 and 12), nor that a carbonate-based polyalkylene oxide may be contacted with the amine grafted polymer coating to produce a polyalkylene modified

polymer coating (as recited in claims 7 and 16). Without such a disclosure, neither Totakura nor Zamora, taken alone or in any combination, render obvious claims 1-3, 5-13, and 15-17.

With respect to claims 4 and 13, which have been rejected as obvious over Zamora in view of Totakura, further in view of Hu, the Examiner admits that neither Zamora nor Totakura disclose coating a suture by plasma polymerizing a hydrocyclosiloxane and then plasma grafting amines thereto. Thus, neither Zamora nor Totakura, taken alone or in any combination, render claims 4 and 13 obvious.

Hu fails to remedy the deficiencies of Zamora and Totakura. The Examiner asserts Hu teaches coating polypropylene fibers or other medical devices with a coating formed by plasma co-polymerization of a hydrocyclosiloxane and N-trimethylsilylallylamine. However, while Hu discloses coating microporous fibers to protect against plasma leakage and gas permeability, nowhere does Hu disclose or suggest a method for improving the fray resistance of a suture having at least one filament by applying a coating to at least a portion of a surface of the at least one filament of the suture by a plasma polymerization process of a hydrocyclosiloxane monomer as recited in claim 1, nor a method for making a suture with such a coating as recited in claim 10, nor the introduction of an amine group onto the coating by copolymerization of an unsaturated or cyclic amine with the hydrocyclosiloxane monomer on the surface of the filament as recited in claims 4 and 13. As noted above, Hu is focused on plasma leakage and gas permeability, not improving the fray resistance of sutures. Thus, there is no motivation to combine Hu, Zamora and/or Totakura, and thus none of these references, taken alone or in any combination, render claims 4 and 13 obvious.

It is believed that the claims of the application, i.e., claims 1-17, are patentably distinct over the art of record and are in condition for allowance. In the event that the examiner believes that a telephone conference or a personal interview may facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, the undersigned may be contacted at the number indicated below. In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, early and favorable action on this application are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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